

**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney*

*Eastern District of Virginia*

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**NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Armin Elahi, aged 28, of Silver Spring, Maryland, was sentenced today to 40 months imprisonment by the Honorable James C. Cacheris, United States District Court Judge.

The defendant previously pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy, for his participation as a leader of an organization that distributed about 200,000 ecstasy pills in Northern Virginia, Washington, D.C. and Maryland from 1999 through March, 2001. Elahi is the fifth defendant in this federal investigation to be sentenced.

During the conspiracy, Elahi and two others made weekly trips to New York via personal car or Amtrak with thousands of dollars in cash and purchased tens of thousands of ecstasy pills. These pills were later repackaged for resale to other local dealers, who would sell the pills to young adults in D.C. area nightclubs and public parking lots or private residences in the Northern Virginia suburbs. The pills would then be re-sold for anywhere from \$12 to \$20 per pill.

Beginning in October, 2000, and continuing through February, 2001, an undercover officer from the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office was able to purchase between 50 and 100 ecstasy pills at a time from 4 local dealers in Loudoun County. Those dealers were ultimately arrested and agreed to cooperate. The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office then referred the case to federal agents of the DEA and IRS at the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Task Force in Annandale, Virginia for further investigation of other targets who resided outside of Loudoun County.

In February, 2001, the DEA arrested a fifth local dealer in Annandale, Virginia, after he distributed 500 ecstasy pills, and a sixth dealer in March, 2001, in Loudoun County after he sold 375 ecstasy pills.

The arrest of Armin Elahi, Andrew Xeron and four co-conspirators came 3 weeks after the DEA seized \$36,000 in cash from Avadesh Gulati at Union Station in Washington, D.C. before he attempted to board an Amtrak train to New York.

“These defendants pushed very dangerous drugs that are particularly attractive to the youth of our community. This office will vigorously prosecute anyone who attempts to lure others into the black hole of drug abuse,” said U.S. Attorney McNulty.

This case was investigated by local task force officers from Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office and agents of the DEA and IRS at the HIDTA Task Force. Prosecution was handled by Special Assistant United States Attorney Kimberly Riley Pedersen.